1. **National Food Security Mission (NFSM)**: The National Development Council on 29th May, 2007 adopted a resolution to launch a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, Food Security Mission. NFSM has been launched in 312 identified districts of 17 States from Rabi 2007-08. The NFSM, *inter alia*, covers Pulses. Its target is to increase production of pulses by 2 million tonnes by the end of the Eleventh Five Year Plan.

2. **Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana**: A new State Plan scheme of Additional Central Assistance(ACA) for Agriculture & Allied Sectors namely Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) has been launched during 2007-08 with an outlay of Rs.25,000 crore for the 11th Five Year Plan to enhance investment in agriculture and allied sectors. The broad objective of the scheme is to incentivize the States to increase public investment to achieve 4% growth rate in Agriculture and allied sectors in the Eleventh Five Year Plan.

3. **Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oilpalm & Maize (ISOPOM)**: ISOPOM is implemented in 14 major Oilseeds and Pulses growing States *viz;* Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Under ISOPOM, assistance is given to the States to encourage farmers to grow pulses on a large scale.

4. **Increased Budgetary Outlay**: The actual expenditure on Agriculture and allied sector was Rs 22,000 crore in the Tenth Plan. Government has increased the Central Government outlay on Agriculture and allied sector to Rs 87,000 crore in Eleventh Plan.

Absorption of porters/coolies as fourth grade employees

*106. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has decided that porters/coolies would be absorbed as fourth grade employees;

(b) if so, whether they would be given the scale of fourth grade employees; and

(c) if so, whether passengers would not be required to pay porters/coolies?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Licensed Porters/coolies after being appointed as Gangmen do not perform the job of licensed porters/coolies. Instead, they would be performing duties attached to the post of Gangman. Handling of passenger's luggage is done by licensed porters/coolies on the stations and they will have to be paid by the passengers as per the notified rates.

Deficit in rainfall in certain areas

*107. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Peninsular India was facing deficit in rainfall from South-West Monsoon during the period 15 June – 15 July;

(b) if so, whether there are areas where deficit has been more than 40 per cent and whether in those areas there has been no sowing or the seeds sown have not germinated;